

Please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-38.

Please add new claims 39-47 as follows:

1-38. (Cancelled).

39. (New) An immunogenic composition comprising a protease maturation protein of *S. pneumoniae*, wherein the protein has an amino acid sequence in accordance with SEQ ID NO: 2, and/or a homologous and/or a functionally homologous protein thereof, wherein the composition raises an immune response to streptococcal infections.

40. (New) The immunogenic composition according to claim 39 for the treatment of *S. pneumoniae*.

41. (New) The immunogenic composition according to claim 39, further comprising a suitable adjuvant or carrier.

42. (New) The immunogenic composition according to claim 39, wherein the protein is the protease maturation protein from *S. pneumoniae* Ft231 or EF3296.

43. (New) The immunogenic composition according to claim 39, wherein the protein is a purified, recombinant or synthetic protein.

44. (New) A method for preparing of an immunogenic composition against *S. pneumoniae* comprising the steps of:

- a. isolating a protease maturation protein of *S. pneumoniae*, wherein the protein has an amino acid sequence in accordance with SEQ. ID. NO: 2, or a recombinant or synthetic protein thereof or a homologous or functionally homologous protein thereof; and
- b. combining the protein obtained under (a) with a suitable carrier or adjuvant.

45. (New) Use of a protease maturation protein of *S. pneumoniae*, wherein the protein has an amino acid sequence in accordance with SEQ. ID. NO: 2, or a recombinant or synthetic protein thereof, as a carrier, comprising combining the protein with a bad immunogen in a vaccine.

46. (New) A method for raising an immune response in a mammal against an infection of *S. pneumoniae* comprising administering a suitable dose of an immunogenic composition according to claim 39.

47. (New) A recombinant protease maturation protein comprising an amino acid sequence in accordance with SEQ. ID. NO: 2, and/or a homologous and/or a functionally homologous protein thereof.